JL - re HSCA hearings and "critics";Guinn/Hoch/Lifton 9/10/78

This is not really taking any time from the 1997 affidavit. I've just come in from some brief walking, which was precluded all afternoon, and it is almost time to stop for supper. The entire afternoon was broken up by phone calls ranging from two New England buffs to Willis Carto's Marty Price. I made four efforts to walk as far as the end of thelane before the phone permitted it. (I guess others are eating.)

Lifton also phoned and we talked a long time. He finally sees, or says he sees, the potential importance of the FOIA cases. He also says that he, too, will make a realeffort to get the AIB tape to you in time for me to hear what Guinn said after the hearing after I return Wednesday. We'll see.

What I want Dave in particular to know and to get his own reading on is what Lifton told me Hoch impressed upon him as the greatest need of the commentary on the Guinn testimony - don't let anybody forget that it was John Nichols who got all the Mannlicher-Carcanno ammo for Guinn to use for his backgrounds. Literally this.

When I asked Lifton what difference it made he had no answer.

What he and Hoch appear to have neither known nor understood about all of this, not from this quoted same but from the entire conversation, is simply staggering. I say this from the entire conversation and the explanations required of me by it.

He says he has a taped interview with Stringer, the autopsy medical photographer, which is quite contradictory to the officail account. Also that from this source he knows that the film the Secret Service ruined was not of the autopsy but of the big-shots present at it. He says he has his book in the hands of an agent and that the agent told him that if he does not give this stuff to the committee he'll be subject to charges of withholding evidence. He asked my advice. I suggested that he hold a press conference at which he says this is evidence I obtained and the comnitee appears not to have. I am holding this press conference so that all who want to may know what the evidence is, hear the tape, and be aware of any further uses or misuses by the committee, to which I am giving this evidence. He was thinking of just giving it to them and await the decision from on high. I told him that was asking for a partisan rebuttal and the suppression of what the committee wanted suppressed. Also for pressure to be applied to Stringer for him to do a Perry.

The Stringer story is that the back of the head was blown away. I told Lifton to check the later Zapruder slides, which shows the hair clearly on it and no trace of blood on the shirt collar.

These self-seekers have blown a real opportunity by their selfishness and self-promotion of their own clique. None was prepared, none really knew what to talk about, none perceived any but the most glaring faults. Lifton, with his physics training, did not notive Guinn on copper in NAAs and his failure to test any, did not know about Guinn's work on this for DJ or his Forensic Sciences article, or after reading Post Mortem that Badon lied. Etcetcetcetc.

So what makes any expert? Not command of basic evidence of the crime. ...I told him they should have prepared, should have had someone there who was familiar with the actualities of the evidence to be presented, etc., and that the consequences of their not doing this were their responsibility, not mine. ...From what he said it is not certain that he will stay for the next two days. He has no place to stay, as you know. In Bud's big house there is no room for him. The AIB people have no space. You didn't. So he is real popular. He is exploring a less expensive room so he can be there the next couple of days, he says. ...He thinks this is the end for the critics. I said for others, those who foolishlely expected what was not possible, then ignored all they all ignored and continued associations with the committee. Perhaps a dry joke but he suggested that Groden will make a public conversion to the official lines.